

REMARKS

Claim 17 remains in the application. Claim 17 has been amended. Reconsideration of this application in view of the amendments noted is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

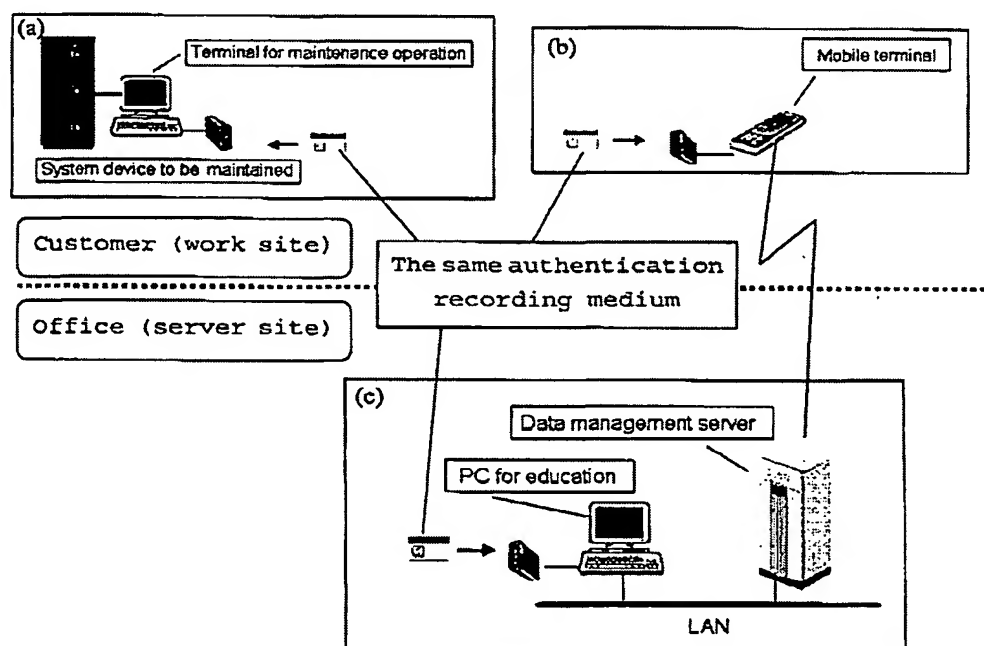
Specifically, the recitation "such as" was found to render the claim indefinite. Also, the recitation "the same" was found to be unclear with respect to what "the same" actually refers to.

The recitation "such as" has been amended to read --including--. The recitation "the same" has been amended to specifically recite the object to which it refers. More particularly, the recitation "said mobile terminal has a function to read the data stored in said authentication recording medium by using said second authentication recording medium read/write device and to send the same" has been amended to read --said mobile terminal has a function to read the data stored in said authentication recording medium by using said second authentication recording medium read/write device and to send said data stored in said authentication recording medium--. Similarly, the recitation "a function to transmit a result of learning performed by an operator to said data management server via said local area network, receive a qualification determination from said data management server via said local area network, and additionally has a function to record/update the same" has been amended to read --a function to transmit a result of learning performed by an operator to said data management server via said local area network, receive a qualification determination from said data management server via said local area network, and additionally has a function to record/update said result of learning performed by an operator--.

For these reasons, applicant submits that claim 17 is definite. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the Section 112, second paragraph rejection of claim 17 be withdrawn.

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bly et al. (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/0087345, hereinafter “Bly”) in view of Hobgood et al. (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2003/0132283, hereinafter “Hobgood”) and Sofia et al. (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2003/0211450, hereinafter “Sofia”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As shown in the following illustration, in the present invention a terminal for maintenance operation at the “Customer (work site)” is isolated from a data management server at the “Office (server site).”



A feature of the presently claimed invention is that the data management server located at the “Office (server site)” is not directly connected to the terminal for maintenance operation located at the “Customer (work site),” but the “Office (server site)” and “Customer (work site)” are connected by only a mobile terminal using an authentication recording medium via a communication network.

Claim 17 has been amended to clarify that the system includes (a) a terminal for maintenance operation at a work site, (b) a mobile terminal, and (c) a data management

server at a server site connected to a PC for education by a local area network. Claim 17 has also been amended to clarify that “said terminal for maintenance operation (a) at said work site is not directly connected to said data management server (c) at said server site, but said terminal for maintenance operation (a) is connected to said data management server (c) via said mobile terminal (b) and a communication network.”

At the Office (work site), the data management server is connected to a PC via a local area network (LAN). The PC includes an authentication recording medium read/write device, and the PC is used for self-education of an operator by using the authentication recording medium. The operator also uses the authentication recording medium to carry out a maintenance operation for managing and maintaining a system or device at the Customer (work site).

In the presently claimed system, the same skill authentication data of the operator is used at both the work site and server site by inserting the authentication recording medium into each authentication recording medium read/write device, even though the Customer (work site) is not directly connected to the Office (server site). Thus, the system is useful even if, for example, the Customer (work site) is far from the Office (server site).

None of the cited references, either alone or in combination, discloses or fairly suggests the claimed feature that the system for maintaining qualification of an operator by using an authentication recording medium includes a Customer (work site), an Office (server site), and a mobile terminal connecting the work site and server site via a communication network.

In this regard, Bly does not disclose or fairly suggest a system for maintaining qualification of an operator in which a terminal for maintenance operation at said work site is not directly connected to a data management server at the server site, but the terminal for maintenance operation is connected to the data management server via a mobile terminal and a communication network, as claim 17 requires. In contrast to the presently claimed invention, the analysis controller database 78 of the asset controller 51 of Bly is directly connected to the local controller 36 at a work site by the internet (see paragraph [0056] and FIG. 3).

Further, Hobgood and Sofia fail to remedy this deficiency.

For these reasons, the cited references do not disclose or fairly suggest the claimed feature that the data management server located at an Office (server site) is not directly connected to a terminal for maintenance operation located at a Customer (work site), but are connected by a mobile terminal and a communication network.

Therefore, applicant submits that no combination of Bly with Hobgood and Sofia results in the present invention as claimed in claim 17. Hence, claim 17 is patentable over Bly, Hobgood, and Sofia. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the Section 103(a) rejection of claim 17 as being unpatentable over Bly in view of Hobgood and Sofia be withdrawn.

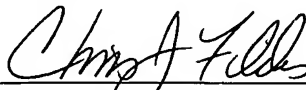
A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) and a PTO-2038 authorizing payment in the amount of \$810.00 to cover the fee under 37 CFR 1.17(e) are included with this response.

This amendment and request for reconsideration is believed to be fully responsive to the comments and suggestions of the examiner and to place this application in condition for allowance. Favorable action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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